



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Washington, DC 20534

February 7, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR DOD PROCUREMENT PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Expedited FPI Waiver Processing and Notification Pilot

Federal Prison Industries (FPI, trade name UNICOR) is a preferred source of supply for products listed on the FPI Schedule of Products. Federal agencies, however, are also permitted to request a waiver to purchase from sources other than FPI whenever they believe that FPI cannot meet their needs. One of the recommendations in the recently completed joint DoD/FPI study to Congress was that FPI should initiate an expedited notification process for all DoD waiver requests which total \$2,500 or less. If these DoD waiver requests are submitted with all information necessary for FPI to make a decision, waivers will be processed by close of the next business day following receipt of such requests.

FPI is hereby announcing the immediate implementation of an expedited waiver processing and notification pilot for all DoD waiver requests which total \$2,500 or less. Under this DoD expedited waiver processing pilot, DoD customers submitting waiver requests via the UNICOR web site, which are in compliance with the procedures outlined below, will receive notification of approval or denial by close of the next business day following receipt of such requests. Waiver requests must be received by 8:00 p.m. EST (2000 hours EST) for these waivers to be processed by close of the next business day. Waiver requests submitted under this DoD expedited waiver processing pilot will be automatically approved if no action is taken by close of the next business day following receipt of such requests.

The procedures below must be followed in order for DoD waiver requests up to \$2,500 to be eligible for the expedited waiver pilot.

- Only DoD waiver requests submitted via the UNICOR web site at www.unicor.gov, which do not exceed \$2,500, will be eligible for this expedited waiver service.

- Follow the waiver request instructions carefully. Only those requests with complete information can be processed through this expedited service.¹ All waiver request details can be obtained by visiting the UNICOR web site at www.unicor.gov, or by contacting the UNICOR Customer Service Center (CSC), Lexington, Kentucky, at (800) 827-3168.
- The sum total of all items in a waiver request cannot exceed \$2,500 and must include only standard catalog items.
- You must identify the request as a DoD waiver not to exceed \$2,500. You must select *Department of Defense \$2500 Program* as the department code so that your request will qualify as a DoD expedited waiver request transaction, and list the item(s) and corresponding price(s) up to a total of \$2,500. Remember to submit ALL necessary information as described in UNICOR's on-line waiver procedures (see footnote 1). For this pilot, you MUST include your E-mail address and fax number for reply purposes.
- Written notification of waiver approval or denial will be issued by close of the next business day following receipt of the request. The waiver decision will be confirmed via E-mail or fax.
- If your waiver request is denied, you may appeal the decision through FPI's Ombudsman. Instructions for filing an appeal can be found on the UNICOR web site. Note that the appeals process is NOT part of the DoD expedited waiver processing pilot.

NOTICE:

Bear in mind that items purchased after receiving waiver approval under this pilot program are not to be used to substantiate future waiver requests on the basis of "matching" or "adding on" to those previous purchases.

For the purposes of this pilot, UNICOR close of business is 8:00 p.m. EST (2000 hours EST), Monday through Friday. Requests must be received by that time for these waivers to be processed by close of the next business day. Waiver requests received after that time will not be processed until the following business day.

¹ Waiver requests must include, at a minimum: 1) name and title of the appropriate contact person, 2) complete mailing address, 3) E-mail address and phone and fax numbers, 4) full and complete description of items, including NSN or UNICOR part number, specific characteristics, special features, functionality, fabric, finish, etc., 5) justification as to why UNICOR's product(s) may not meet the basic needs of your agency, 6) price and quantity, including a total amount, and 7) a realistic delivery date, including certification on delivery turnarounds less than those referenced in the General Services Administration Federal Supply Schedule for similar items.

No specialty or one-of-a-kind products are included under this pilot due to the extensive technical research involved to properly evaluate such requests.

All conditions and requirements identified in the procedural bullets above must be provided for the waiver request to qualify for expedited processing under this pilot.

Although appeals are not included as part of the DoD expedited waiver pilot, every effort will be made to issue timely decisions.

It is the intent of FPI to achieve a successful pilot outcome while ensuring that the procurement process remains as efficient and timely as possible. To this end, FPI will track DoD expedited waiver pilot activities as part of its continuing quality assessment of customer satisfaction and service.


Steve Schwalb
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